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ABSTRACT

A cooperative program of teacher education involving a university, public schools, and the community is built on formal agreements for joint responsibility in teacher training and depends upon clear communication among all participants. In this paper, the structure, areas of responsibility, and lines of communication are described for five cooperative ventures: (1) a university nursery school, which is a traditional laboratory school with emphasis on students working with families in the community; (2) a day care center, a joint project of the university and the county community action council; (3) an early practicum and teacher exchange, run cooperatively by the university and the local school district; (4) cooperation between a local elementary school and the elementary and early childhood department of the university; and (5) a committee of teachers and administrators working with university faculty and students to provide schooling for a small rural mountain area. (JD)

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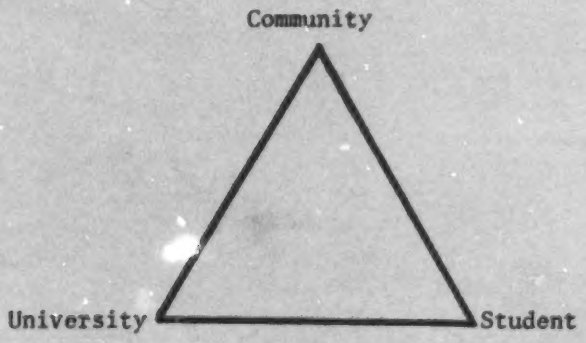
MULTIFACETED PRACTICAL EXPERIENCES IN TEACHER EDUCATION INVOLVING JOINT SPONSORSHIP OF THE SCHOOLS, COMMUNITY AND TEACHER EDUCATORS



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American Association of Colleges for Teacher Education

Annual Meeting

Thursday, February 2, 1984

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University of Maine at Farmington
Franklin Hall
Farmington, Maine 04938

Also Presented to the UMF Faculty and SAD #9 Professional Staff on March 2, 1984

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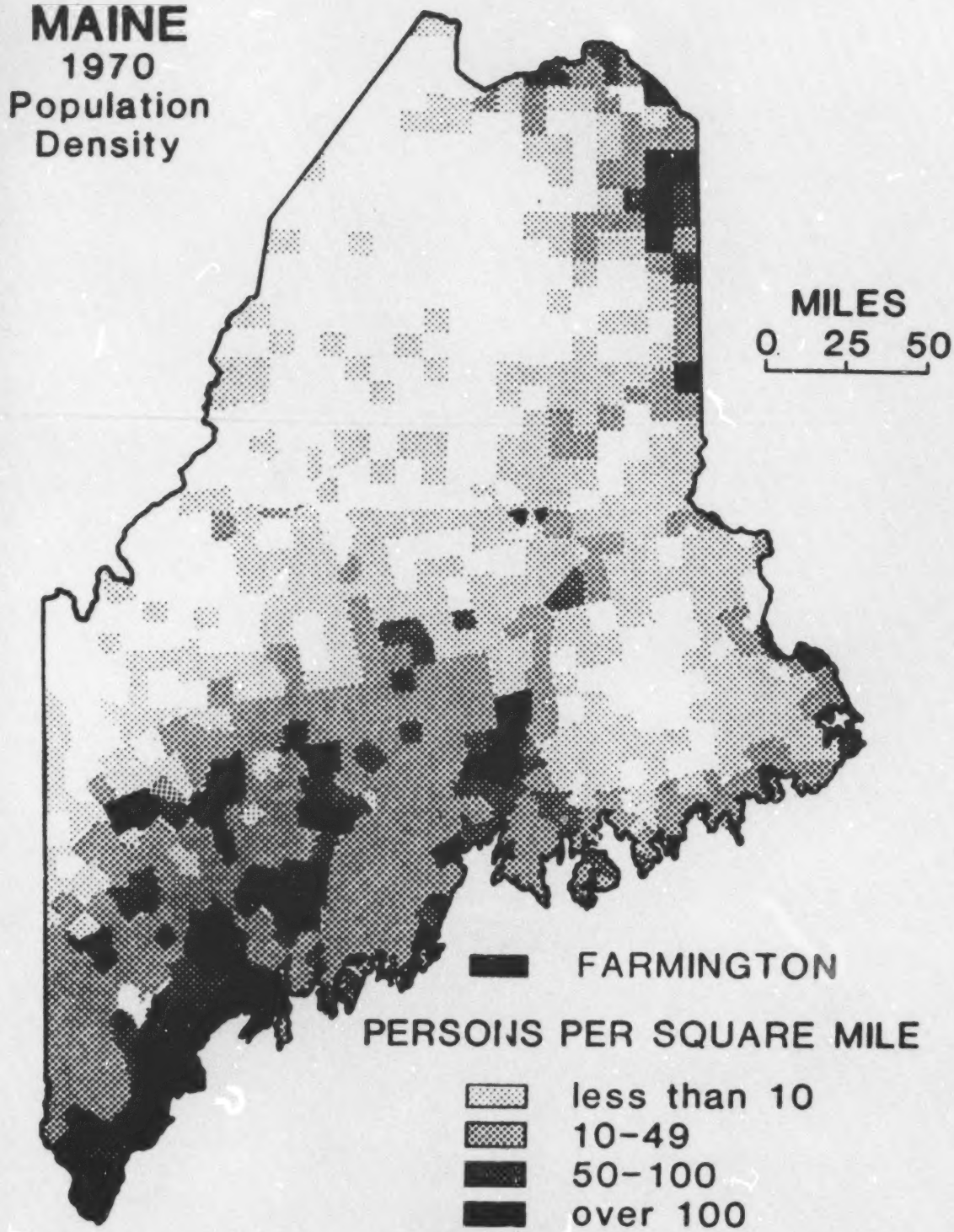

MAINE
1970
Population
Density
MILES
0 25 50
FARMINGTON
PERSONS PER SQUARE MILE
less than 10
10-49
50-100
over 100

Introduction to UMF Teacher Education and the Model for Field Experiences

The University of Maine at Farmington has a long and proud history of service in teacher education to the State of Maine. It was the Normal School, or teacher training institution, for many years. UMF now is an undergraduate institution serving approximately 1500 students in liberal arts, education, and human services. Some graduate courses in education are offered through an arrangement with the University of Southern Maine, but UMF is primarily an undergraduate institution. Even today, UMF continues to mean "teacher education" to many in Maine, and members of the Department of Elementary, Secondary, and Early Childhood Education have, over the years, helped to birth a number of innovative plans for teacher education. One reason for the variety of situations we will explain has centered on geography, and will be addressed below. Another important reason for the variety of experiences centers on the education faculty's belief that early and continuous field experiences are a key ingredient in successful teacher preparation. Different field situations are seen as suitable to students at different stages of development.

To return to geography, we ask you to consider a map of the area. As you look at the map of Maine, it might help to know that there are three times as many people within 30 minutes of Fenway Park in Boston as are in the entire state of Maine. Our total population is about one million. Farmington is located in the western foothills of what is on the whole, a rural and a poor state. There are approximately 300 elementary students, 50 early childhood, and 100 secondary students in our programs at any one time. In addition there are approximately 350 students in special education, which is a separate department at our institution. Obviously this number of students would be a severe strain on any school system or community group that might be working with the university to provide field experiences. In our situation, it is literally an impossible number to be totally integrated into the local school system. The local school district is a regional system serving eleven towns and covering 400 square miles. The size of the schools range from a two teacher school serving a community of 200 which is 25 miles up in the mountains to the regional senior high school of 800 students. Farmington is the "big city" in the area with a population of 6000 excluding the college students.

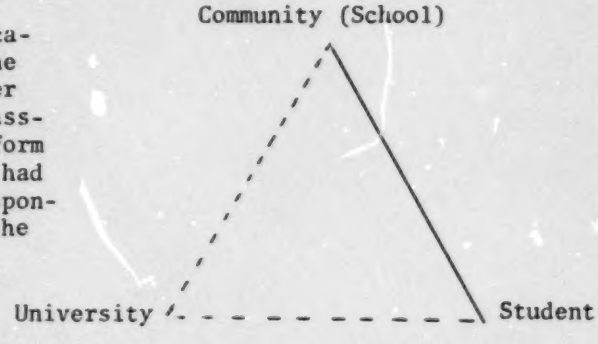
Over the years we have tried meeting this difficult situation of student need for variety in field experiences and inability of area schools to accommodate so many students, by a multiplicity of experiences involving other community agencies and by formal agreements giving community agencies (including schools) joint responsibility in the process of teacher education. These many experiences are expanding in type and complexity even now. One reason they are expanding today is due to aggressive new leadership at UMF; another is the outer force of national dissatisfaction with teacher quality and with schools of teacher education. The basic design of several of our programs in place is innovative and has proved remarkably dynamic and adaptable to change. This appears to be largely because these programs are built on formal agreements for joint responsibility in teacher training. The agreements themselves help assure open communication, crucial to success. In our presentation today, we will speak largely of communication. The best communication takes place when all have an acknowledged stake in the outcome. Knowing these strengths of the best of these field experience situations gives us the ability to plan new additions to our programs, building in the safeguards that have proved so important in the past. To further explain these safeguards, we wish to suggest the following model.

Our model has three parts and, at present, three stages of completeness. It is an equilateral triangle, the most stable of geometric designs in engineering. So it has proved its stability to us in designing a program for preservice teachers. The model suggests that co-responsibility for the preservice field experiences lies with the community (school or community agencies), university, and the preservice teacher (student) her or himself. The first crucial aspect in the building of a complete model is the sharing of responsibility for developing and maintaining of various projects. In our experience, formal agreements emphasize joint accountability. These formal agreements will continue to change over the years as the three parties work together. The formal agreements can become something like the constitution, giving balancing power to each of the three branches involved in the process.

The second crucial aspect is strength of communication. The stronger and more open the communication, flowing in both directions along the triangle, the more responsive the triangle to necessary change, and the better the experience for all parties.

As an example of how the model works, let us take a traditional student teaching experience, as many of us perhaps experienced it years ago. Such an experience might produce a triangle that looked like this:

The dotted lines indicate little communication. University supervisors observed the student and spoke to the classroom teacher once or twice during the period. The classroom teacher evaluated the student on a form for the university. Although each party had responsibilities, there was not joint responsibility for developing and maintaining the project.



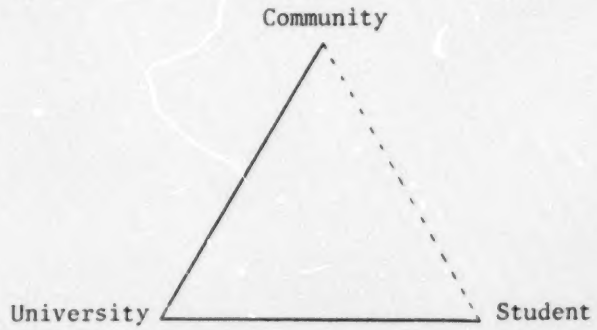
The communication, given no personality clashes, was usually better between student and classroom teacher, with instruction, encouragement, and evaluation by the classroom teacher and questions by the student. That is indicated by the thin solid line. In some situations, the classroom teacher and student developed very open and frank lines of communication, helpful to both parties, a mentor situation, and such a relationship would look like this:

Let us now consider specific situations that have developed at Farmington. Some are quite traditional, yet seem to meet at least the surface needs of the parties. Others have evolved to more completely fit the full model, with preservice education becoming the responsibility of community, university and student as evidenced in formal agreements to that end.

Course Related Practicum

Within several of the education courses, traditional "mini" field experiences take place. In a course in teaching physical education and one in teaching science, university students teach lessons to small groups of students in their school or at the university. Observation in a classroom is another traditional "mini" field experience. Let us examine one such course-related practicum in greater detail. As a part of a course for about 150 students a year in Children's Literature, students are requested to take part in an ongoing experience with children and books, complete with journal entries and a short paper analyzing the experience. The university professor assists the students in locating sites to carry out this "mini" practicum by negotiating with librarians, the UMF day care center and nursery school, local family day care situations, an after-school situation, Headstart, and classroom teachers, all in Farmington. In some cases students have access to brothers and sisters, nieces and nephews and return home often enough to make such an arrangement feasible. A number of older, nontraditional students have used their own family situation, their own children, to observe and interact in. But each semester possible sites must be renegotiated, bringing the university sponsor into touch with the community sources who will serve as hosts for the practicum experience. Students communicate with the university professor through their papers, class questions and anonymous evaluations at the end of the course. Community hosts communicate with the university professor in person and by anonymous evaluations. The situation each semester seems to be meeting most needs of each party. Yet it should be portrayed on our model in this way:

There is a need for greater communication and responsibility on the part of the community and student. The university professor will continue to restructure this experience until a more satisfactory flow of communication, a better meeting of participants' needs, and some co-sponsorship is evident.



The University of Maine at Farmington

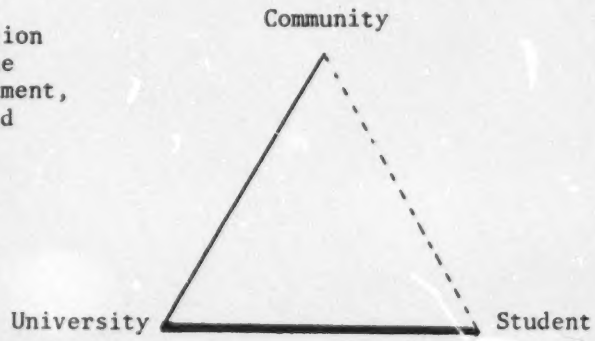
Nursery School - A Laboratory School

The UMF Nursery School is run by the University of Maine at Farmington. The purpose of the Nursery School is to provide a laboratory for students (majoring in Early Childhood Education) and those in other fields who elect preschool training. Approximately twelve students are served full-time per semester. In addition a large number of students observe at the Nursery School each semester.

Presently the Nursery School is part of the Department of Elementary, Secondary, and Early Childhood Education. Originally the Program was developed by the Department of Home Economics. UMF provides space, faculty and students to staff the Program. The Teacher-Director is a tenure-track faculty position indicating a strong commitment of UMF to the Program. Children are enrolled from the community on a first-come, first-served basis and fees are minimal. Approximately 20 children are served per year.

Similar to other laboratory schools, the UMF Nursery School has as a primary focus serving the needs of university students. Secondly, the nursery school exists as a community service. There is an important community relationship between UMF Nursery School faculty, students and parents of the children. There is also emphasis on having community persons, especially parents, visit and observe the Nursery School for the purpose of educating the public about preschools. There are special efforts at the Nursery School to participate in community activities, for example, Operation Santa Claus, a Christmas toy program for low-income, needy families.

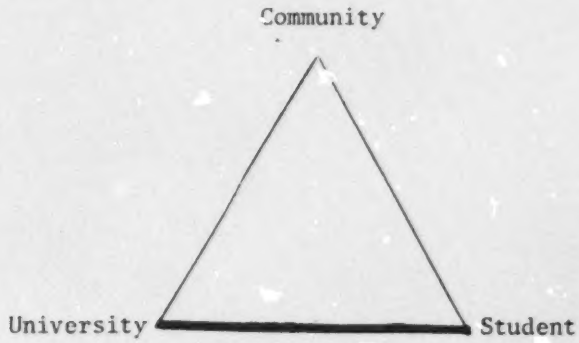
The relationship of community, UMF students and UMF teacher educators may be considered as a triangular situation. As such the traditional situation looks like this:



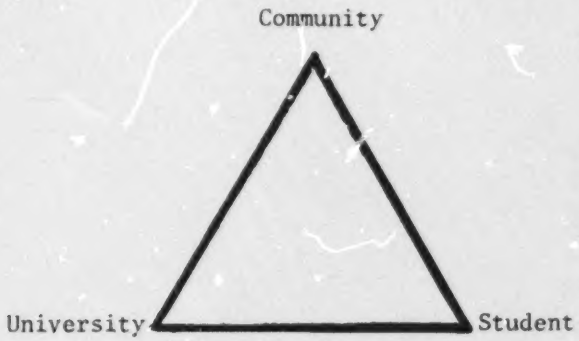
The solid line indicates strong communication between UMF Nursery School teachers and the students with daily instruction, encouragement, collaboration and evaluation. A thin solid line represents the relationship of the community and the university. There is good communication between these two parties but there is no collaboration or cooperation in running the service. UMF runs the service as well as possible to fit community needs and the community serves UMF by providing families. There is a good amount of community relationship between students and the community. Students interact with community persons through interpreting the Nursery School Program and with parents by discussing their children. This relationship is enhanced by Nursery School community activities and has such informal ties such as babysitting.

Currently the triangular relationship is changing. As students take on more responsibility for working with parents and community persons the line moves from dotted to a thin solid one. There is also an emphasis on students learning to

fully operate the nursery school, particularly in the second semester of the year when they have gained sufficient experience.



In summary, in some ways the UMF Nursery School is traditional laboratory approach, with students as a primary focus in the arrangement. Nonetheless the emphasis on having students work with families and the community and on having families be full partners in their child's program is more innovative. A truly cooperative relationship might involve joint sponsorship by the university, students and a community agency with full participation of these parties in the planning, implementing and evaluation of the Nursery School. This innovative approach would be represented by thick solid lines on all three legs of the triangle.



Sweatt-Winter Day Care Center: A Joint Project

The Sweatt-Winter Day Care Center is a joint project of the University of Maine at Farmington and the Franklin County Community Action Council. The Center's major purpose is to provide all-day care to families of all incomes both at UMF and Franklin County.

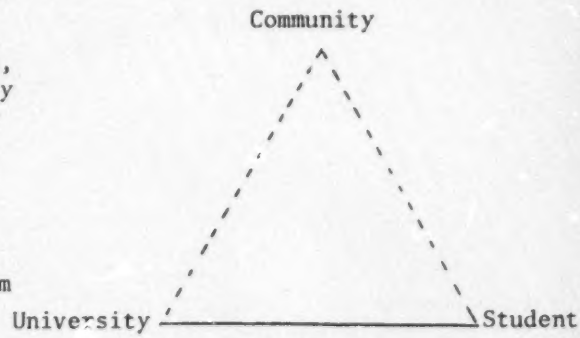
In addition the Center is a site for training UMF students to work in a child care setting. Approximately fifty-five university students per year - the majority of whom are in Early Childhood or Elementary Education, or Special Education receive training at the Center. In addition many observers enrolled in a variety of UMF classes observe and visit the Center.

The Center serves 45 children at a time, at least 12 of whom are from families where a parent is a student at UMF. Fees are charged according to family income and at least 20 low-income families pay only a nominal fee for child care.

The Center is part of the Department of Elementary, Secondary, and Early Childhood Education at UMF. The educational directorship of the Center is a tenure track faculty position in Early Childhood Education, an indication of the strong commitment of UMF to the joint project.

The need for day care in Franklin County was identified during the 60's when CAP (Franklin County Community Action Council, Inc.) conducted a county-wide needs assessment. For years, many interested citizens, agencies and industrial representatives joined together to work on the feasibility of starting a day care center. At one point a local 4-C (Community Coordinated Child Care) was formed with the task of providing an approach to the planning and development of a center. Anticipated financial resources never developed from 4-C, however, and the committee was dissolved. In 1974, students at UMF identified a need for day care. In the fall of 1974 a small center serving 12 children of students and faculty opened on campus. As with traditional on-campus child care arrangements UMF donated space only to this effort.

The traditional campus child care arrangement would look like this:



The thin solid line indicates some commitment in the form of a facility to house the program. Since the program exists primarily for students, the university's responsibility to the community is quite small, in this case represented either by no line or by a dotted line. Usually community input is minimal, if existant, and may take the form of an advisory board and non-human resources. Similarly, the link between the students and the community is characterized by a nonexistant or dotted line. If the program also serves community persons then there is input by the families to students. If the program serves only students, the student/community relationship is nonexistant.

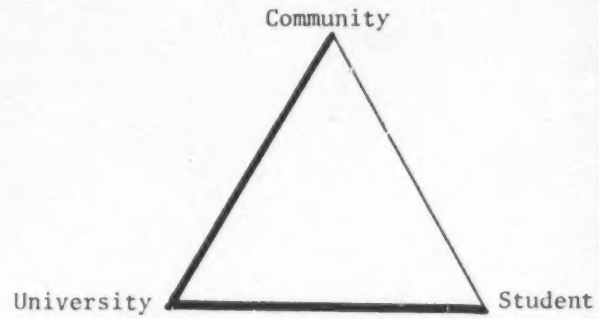
In March of 1975, the CAP Agency, with funding from CETA (Comprehensive Employment Training Act) hired a child care coordinator to mobilize available day care resources and prove the feasibility of day care. Eventually, this evolved into a cooperative effort between the University of Maine at Farmington and CAP. UMF was willing to provide space, faculty, and student manpower, while the CAP Agency provided seed money, full-time teaching staff, and program development and administration. The Sweatt-Winter Day Care Program now receives funding from such

varied sources as the Franklin County Commissioners, parent fees, the Child Care Food Program, CETA, Social Services Block Grant through the Department of Human Services, The United Way Agency, and substantial UMF in-kind donations.

In February of 1977 services were expanded to include a network of licensed family day care homes through the county. The homes are sponsored by CAP. UMF students are served by homes in two ways: (1) as parents needing child care and (2) as practicum sites for training in day care by Early Childhood Education majors.

The joint sponsorship of the Center enables both agencies to meet needs of the university and community. CAP is able to provide necessary, low-cost quality child care services as well as to create community jobs and a training site for federal and state programs such as CETA. In addition to offering a community service, UMF is able to meet its students' need for child care, and develop a child care training site for a myriad of students in Early Childhood, Elementary, Special Education, Psychology and Home Economics. Finally, UMF and CAP as joint sponsors have developed a model child care site for the local and statewide persons interested in day care.

The Project may be described by the triangle model as follows: The relationship of the university and the community is cooperative with both having decision making in the program operation and a strong flow of communication between the two parties. The solid thick line represents the partnership. The university and student relationship is characterized by another strong communication network. The students have a necessary high quality child care service which is part of the local community. Students are part of an advisory board, (along with community and university members) that sets policy. Students desiring practice or a work study job have the opportunity of working in the Center. There, they are supervised, intensely advised and evaluated by a university faculty member who is in weekly, if not daily, contact.



The link between students and the community is represented by a thin solid line. Students interpret the program to interested community observers, as well as work with parents of the children at the Center. They also serve on the Advisory Board. The communication between community and students exists but is less than that between university and student or university and community. In some situations the student/community relationship is represented by a thick solid line. A student who is a parent, involved in the advisory board and a worker at the Center has more input and a more cooperative relationship with the community.

Recently, the influx of non-traditional students at the university has resulted in an increasing interest in child care. Child care needs of these students is pressing UMF to consider expanding child care service. The county has an ever growing demand for child care as well, particularly for children under three years and those of school age. Similar to the initial stages of cooperation UMF and CAP are currently working together to assess the expanding need.

In sum, the Center is an innovative model for child care. The cooperative venture stemming from university, student and community needs has continued to grow and change. In the near future, consideration of non-traditional student's demand for child care by the university and CAP is of vital importance. In addressing this issue, the relationship of students to the community may be further strengthened.

Early Practicum and Teacher Exchange

The Ed 102 Practicum is a joint venture between the University of Maine at Farmington and the local school district, SAD #9. It is designed to provide an early field experience in the classroom for sophomores in Education. In the beginning it was an elective, but it is now required of all education majors.

This arrangement was and is quite traditional. The student is assigned to a classroom for a period of five hours a week. This time may be blocked as it is for elementary majors, and varying as it is for secondary and some special education majors. Transportation is furnished by the university to those schools beyond walking distance. The cooperating teachers provide various experiences in the classroom from housekeeping chores to instruction for the trainees. The expectations for this course are included in the packet.

The program was originated in the early seventies. The supervision of the practicum student was carried out by various members of the education department and other nonteaching educators on a part-time basis. This proved to be an unsatisfactory arrangement due to a lack of communication and continuity. Therefore, what we consider to be an innovation in this type of program was implemented.

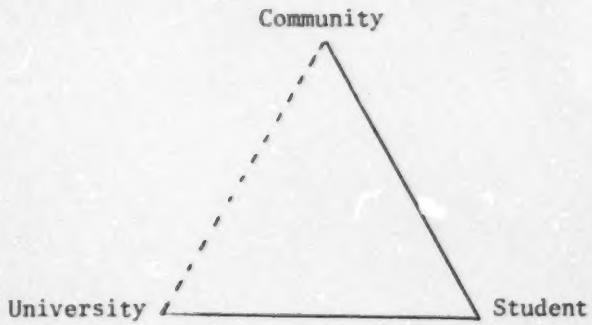
In 1979 the program was reorganized by proposing that a teacher exchange between School Administrative District #9 and the Elementary, Secondary, and Early Childhood Program at the University of Maine, Farmington campus be implemented. Under the terms of the agreement a selected classroom teacher from School Administrative #9 would become an adjunct faculty member in the Elementary, Secondary, and Early Childhood Department for the academic year. The university would provide funds for a qualified teacher to assume the duties of what was to become known as the Exchange Teacher. The teacher selected from SAD #9 would be responsible for the placement and supervision of education majors enrolled in the Ed 102 Practicum.

The objectives of the exchange program are to provide an opportunity for establishing closer cooperation and coordination between the schools and the university in the field based teacher training components. It provides more direct input from practicing teachers, and it has developed a more direct line of communication between the cooperating teachers and training programs. The exchange is a means for a better understanding of the training programs at UMF by teachers within SAD #9, and provides them with direct input into the training program. It is assumed that eventually a cadre of teachers who are thoroughly acquainted with the training program at the University of Maine, Farmington campus, will be established in the local schools, thus, improving both our relations and program.

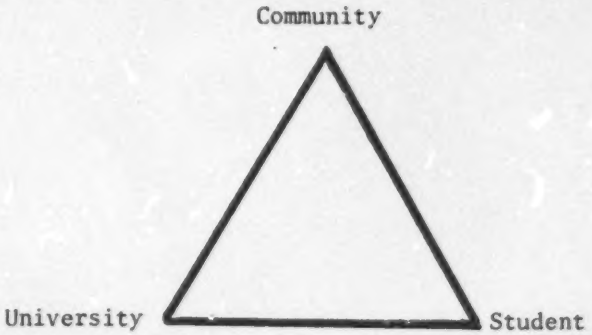
The proposal provides an opportunity for teachers within the district to gain experience in the field of supervision and administration. It benefits the school district by allowing teachers an opportunity to extend their expertise in curriculum, methods, and trends in the field of education. Under the terms of the agreement the School Administrative District #9 teacher remains an employee of the school district in terms of pay, fringe benefits, and other contractual rights. The replacement teacher will be under contract with the school district.

The Teacher Exchange is an outgrowth of a previous arrangement, the Ed 102 Practicum. The original Ed 102 Practicum could be represented by our model as follows:

The line representing the relationship between the community as represented by SAD #9 teachers and the university was a broken or dotted line. Very little communication existed between the two. The relationship between the school personnel and the students was greater, thus a thin line. The relationship between the student in the practicum and the university faculty was limited and thus a thin line.



Once the Teacher Exchange was instituted the triangle changed, and incorporated both the practicum and the teacher exchange. The line representing the university and community (SAD #9) is a heavy solid one indicating a strong interaction. This is also true for the lines representing the college student and the school personnel. The communication between the college student and the university was also increased. All groups acquired a better understanding of the program. If a problem arose, it was quickly identified and a joint effort was made to resolve it. The classroom teacher was dealing with a colleague who understood their situation. The faculty had someone who understood their program, and best of all, the trainees had a friend.



We are including the job description of the exchange teacher and the expectations for Ed 102. These two projects have enhanced the cooperation between the university and the local school district. They have been contributing factors to extending the working relationship into other areas.

The following is a job description for the teacher exchange program.

1. Assist in obtaining classroom teachers to participate in the practicum program.
2. Assist in organizing and assigning students to various schools and classrooms.
3. Supervise the college students in the field.
4. Assist the classroom teachers in utilization and training of the students.
5. Assist the students in planning and carrying out assigned responsibilities and activities.
6. Conduct weekly seminars with students assigned to the practicum(s).

The following guidelines are provided for the selection of the SAD #9 teacher.

1. An elementary or junior high teacher (with elementary training) who has a minimum of five (5) years of teaching experience in the regular classroom of which three years have been in SAD #9. The restriction is necessary due to the fact that the vast majority of the practicum students are elementary majors.

2. An expressed interest and intent to train in supervision, administration or teacher training.

3. A teacher identified as being innovative during his/her tenure in SAD #9 and one evaluated as outstanding.

The following Selection Process was set up.

1. SAD #9 will circulate the announcement requesting application to all eligible teachers.

2. Interested teachers will provide a written letter of application stating how the experience would benefit the individual teacher and SAD #9.

3. Applicants must be recommended by their building principal or appropriate administrator(s).

4. The candidate must be approved by the administration of SAD #9.

5. Consideration will be given to the length of service and intent to enter the field supervision.

6. Final selection will be a joint process by the faculty of the Department of Elementary, Secondary, and Early Childhood Education and school administration.

7. The university reserves the right to reject a given candidate.

The following guidelines for selecting the replacement teacher funded by the university is as follows.

1. The candidates will meet the selection standards of SAD #9.
2. Selection will be based on the teaching position to be filled, thus, the position should be considered to be temporary and to be for given year.
3. The replacement teacher will be an employee of the school district and will be elected by the district according to its hiring procedures.

Teachers who are interested and meet the selection guides must submit a letter of application accompanied by a vita through their principal to the superintendent's office.

EXPECTATIONS FOR ED 102 PRACTICUM
FOR THE COLLEGE STUDENT

This is a list of expectations for the Ed 102 Practicum. It can be expected that you will have an opportunity to experience most of the list dependent upon the grade placement and classroom organization.

1. It is expected that college students will be punctual and well groomed at all times. It is the student's responsibility to inform the school/teacher when he/she will be absent for any reason.

2. It is expected that the college student will be professional in his/her relations with the school teacher, faculty, parents and be aware of the need for confidentiality.

3. The college student should be aware of effective written and oral language, and delivery style. This may need constructive advice by the cooperating teacher and supervisor.

4. It is expected that students will operate audio-visual equipment and other machines.

5. It is expected that students perform a variety of duties related to teaching such as taking attendance, collecting lunch money, monitoring bathrooms and halls, and playground and bus duty under the supervision and in cooperation with the teacher(s).

6. The college student should be aware of the need to develop a good rapport and working relationship with the children/students, teacher(s), administrators, and other school personnel.

7. The college student is expected to work with children on a one-to-one basis, small and large groups, and the class as a whole. This would depend upon the organization of the classroom and the stage of development of the college trainee.

8. The college student will be provided the opportunity to instruct children or an individual, small and large group, and whole class under the direction and guidance of the classroom teacher. The extent of these exercises will depend upon the stage of development of the college trainee.

9. The college student will be expected to correct papers, help with make-up work, prepare bulletin boards, record grades, and prepare materials under the guidance of the teacher.

10. The student will be expected to plan and develop lessons, instruction materials, mini units, and enrichment activities to be presented in the classroom under the direction and with the approval of the classroom teacher.

11. The college student is expected to prepare a case study on a child(ren) in the classroom. This will be carried out with the agreement of the child, and will be prepared in a professional and confidential manner.

12. The college student should recognize there are different teaching styles, classroom management and disciplines utilized effectively by teachers. The college student can have the opportunity to observe different approaches.

13. The college student should utilize their talents and experiences to enrich the learning opportunities for the children/students and themselves; example: music, art, travel, sports, theater, crafts, etc.

14. The college student will be expected to obtain prior approval of the cooperating teacher and building administrator to carry out any project or activity that is not part of the Ed 102 requirements.

15. The college student should feel free to request additional information, experiences, and/or procedures that may be of interest or benefit to him/her.

16. The University provides transportation for Ed 102. The college student utilizing this service needs to be on time, and to be responsible for informing Dot of changes in their schedule.

17. The college student will have the opportunity to meet with building principals concerning school policies and his/her experience.

THE ROME PROJECT

The Rome Reading Practicum is a cooperative venture between the Rome Elementary School and the Elementary, Secondary, and Early Childhood Department. The purpose of the program is to provide an intensive support program in reading to a four and one-half teacher, K to 8, rural school. Approximately 16 junior and senior elementary majors are teamed with classroom teachers to provide reading/language arts instruction to an isolated rural school which is in a low social economic area.

The program has been in existence for nine years, and the arrangement has progressed through several stages. Originally the school sought assistance in improving the reading performance of their students. An inservice program for the teachers and diagnostic services were provided. In 1974 UMF received a two year Right to Read Teacher Preparation Project, and Rome became one of the project's field sites. UMF students taking an advanced reading course assumed a major responsibility for instruction in reading for all grades. A faculty member assumed the role as coordinator and supervisor in the school. The teachers became part of the "reading team."

The program was continued when the Right to Read Project ended with the school district and the university sharing the cost. During this period two other small rural schools asked to have similar projects in their schools. These were a two teacher and six teacher schools again approximately 20 miles from campus. Similar programs of inservice and program modification were instituted in each school. College students and faculty members were assigned to each school and the cost was shared.

In the case of the latter two schools, the need for the arrangement was satisfied after four and five years. The Rome school situation is different. With a school population in which 98% of the children are eligible for free school lunch and limited resources, Rome desires an on-going program. In terms of man/woman power the university students are critical to a viable program in that school. From the university's view, Rome provides a realistic and dynamic training site.

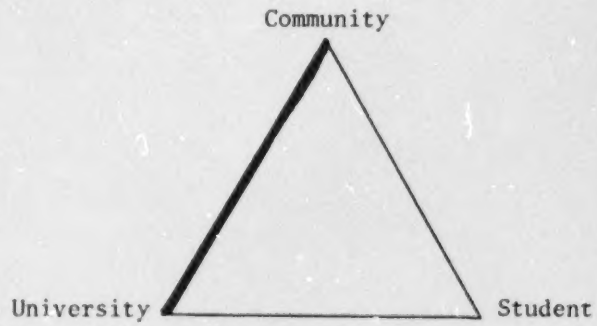
In terms of our model, Rome has evolved from a university to community (teacher) relationship to a three way relationship. The university and community relationship has expanded to include the children, parents, and the public. This is, also, true of the relationship between the UMF students and the community which has developed along the same lines. The strong ties between the university (faculty) and students in this setting is apparent.

The Rome type project has evolved from a very traditional arrangement in which the university provides inservice and expertise to a school to one in which all populations as represented by our model are actively participating and sharing in a project that benefits all parties. Rome is an example of how a limited relationship can expand into a more extensive and complex program. This type of project is one in which all parties share the responsibility and control, with each benefiting from the joint venture.

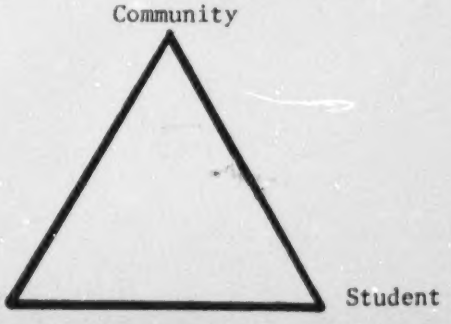
Mt. Blue Committee

There is a mountain in our area called Mt. Blue. It is a local landmark overlooking the 400 square miles which makes up School Administrative District #9. We, also, have a state park, a shopping center, a medical association, and the regional high school, etc. with the name Mt. Blue. Therefore, we have a Mt. Blue Committee. This is a committee made up of teachers, and administrators from the local school district, university faculty who are involved in the schools, and education majors. The group came into being because of the impact of the university on the local schools. The university had a need to provide a variety of field experiences for some 800 education majors in a school district of less than 3,000 students, and 200 professional staff, and one which is scattered over ten schools and nine towns. The school district needed to know who was in their schools and what they were doing. The number of traditional course related practicums, student teachers, and other projects was extensive. Thus, there was a need for at least administrative coordination between the two institutions. There was a greater need for planning and cooperation between the school personnel and the college faculty responsible to the placement of the college students. Last but not least, there was the need to attend to the college student.

The creation of the Mt. Blue Committee was the result of a need to establish a stronger means of communication between the school district and the university. The coordination and management of the various small △ resulting from course related practicums, Ed 102 Practicum, teacher exchange, and other projects was the driving force. Thus, one side of the model evolved from a dotted line to a solid line representing the exchange between the school personnel and the college. With the development of the planning and coordination between the school and college, a better understanding of the various projects led to better communications between these two and the college students. At this state the model would look like this:



As the Mt. Blue Committee assumed the responsibility for the planning, coordination of the relationships between the university and the school district, the model became more complete with the inclusion of the college student. It serves as a place to deal with problems, modify programs, and expand the relationship. An example of this is a staff development workshop for both district and college personnel on utilization of the practicum student in the classroom, and making the experience more profitable for the trainee. All three groups are involved in the planning and presenting the program. The Mt. Blue Committee has become an example of shared responsibility in teacher training. Each group contributes and profits from this joint venture. Thus, we have a more fully developed model.



Moving Into the 21st Century

How do we move from 1984 into the 21st century? We at the University of Maine have two projects in the planning stage that are moving us in that direction. Both are examples of close cooperation between the university, the community, and teacher trainees. The development and operation of the two projects will be a shared effort.

The first is a project which may involve two different school districts with some differences in the arrangements. In both cases the university would assume the responsibility for operating a school for the district. In one case we would be responsible for all aspects of the school, managing the budget, hiring the teachers, setting the curriculum, running the buses, maintaining the building, and operating the lunch program. The school board would contract with the university for all services. The school board would be responsible for seeing that the university fulfilled the terms of the contract. All employees would be employed by the university. In fact, the university would have a lab school some 20 miles away from the campus.

In the case of the second school district, the arrangement would differ slightly. The university would assume responsibility for the instructional program in one of the schools of a district. The district would retain the responsibility for bus service, building maintenance, and the school lunch. As in the first case the university would assume the responsibility for the curriculum, and have authority over the professional staff. The school district would contract with the university for these services and oversee the contract. Again we would have a lab school arrangement.

Granted the lab school is an old concept, but the typical lab schools were university owned and oeprated. They were on campus, and the clientele was selective. Here we have an off-campus site with a typical school population. The university will be responsible to the community for the program it offers, and thus, the university must be responsible to the community needs and priorities. The funding will come from the district and university.

The second major project we are actively planning is with a large urban (for Maine) district some 45 miles from campus. In this case an off-campus training site is being planned. The school district and university will share in the training of juniors or seniors on site. The college trainee will be assigned to school(s) which use the team teaching concept for two semesters. Certain course work will be delivered on site. These courses will be taught primarily by faculty, but the classroom teachers will assist in the planning and coordination of the course work and the classroom experiences. In some cases the classroom teacher will be involved in the instruction of the college courses.

The faculty, the teachers, and the students will cooperatively plan the program. The faculty will be actively involved in the schoolrooms. The student will be integrating the practical experience with his/her classes. The classroom teacher will benefit from the inservice the university will provide. The cost of the program will be shared.

In addition to the proposed new arrangements in the training of undergraduates, UMF will be establishing a cooperative follow-up program for its graduates next year. This "mentoring" program will be designed to assist those in their first

year of teaching. An experienced teacher will be identified in the school in which the beginner will be teaching to act as the on-site mentor. A faculty member, either the advisor or one selected by the individual, will serve as the campus mentor for the beginner. Both the teacher and faculty member would provide a support program for the UMF graduate during the first year. The teacher will provide the necessary introduction to the local school system that is always needed. The beginner can draw on the years of experience and expertise of the on-site mentor to meet the challenges of that first year. The faculty member will provide that tie back to campus, and lend his/her expertise to the graduate. This arrangement will utilize the expertise of the experienced teachers, and the ongoing commitment by the UMF faculty. This program is an expression of the responsibility of both the practicing professional and higher education to enhance the development of those entering teaching. This will be shared responsibility with all parties being equal.

Implications

The jointly sponsored practicum arrangements have tremendous implications for teacher training. The described models are beginnings to necessary future innovations. They are important in that they suggest ways in which teacher educators in universities/colleges and community agencies, including public schools, can cooperate to meet the demands of a complex changing world.

Cooperative ventures help answer basic questions posed currently for the future. Who will train teachers? How and where will the training occur? By combining resources teacher training can be shared by traditional post secondary centers of education, i.e. colleges and universities and non-traditional agencies, i.e. public schools and other community groups. Further, cooperation has decided advantages for training teachers from economic, structural and educational standpoints.

The economics of teacher training best are addressed by the question: Who can afford to train teachers? As society increases in complexity the resources necessary to train teachers will grow correspondingly, resulting in an educational process that's extremely expensive. Jointly sponsored practicums will involve a pooling of human and non-human resources, so that no one group will shoulder total financial responsibility. While human resources include teachers, faculty and consultants, non-human resources could include facilities, materials and equipment. Post secondary institutions will be able to offer students multiple practicum experiences without having to operate each one. The community will similarly be able to offer special services without expending enormous amounts.

Cooperative ventures have implications for the educational or learning process of future teachers. The having of "real" or "authentic" experience in training, long regarded as critical by teacher educators, will be essential as the teaching tasks increase in complexity. Theories of adult learning indicate that an integration of practical and theoretical experience occurs when there is ample opportunity to practice. Practicums in community settings will enable preservice teachers to test out abstract theoretical concepts in the real setting. Exposure to more than one setting is essential for broadening the preservice teacher's understanding of teaching styles and pedagogy.

Additionally, mentoring, the linking up of an inexperienced teacher with an experienced teacher necessary for early and continuous support, is likely to occur at the preservice level in the practical work. As a student has different practicum experiences he/she is able to decipher different teaching styles and perspectives of the professional, thus he/she will begin to match him/herself with potential mentors.

The joint sponsorship approach suggests a major structural change in traditional teacher education: a decentralization of training from the university. If the teacher educators share the tasks of training with the public schools and community agencies, each is accountable to the other. It becomes not one institution's responsibility, but others as well. In order to accomplish the task effectively a high level of communication and sharing is required. The requisite communication allows for cross-fertilization of ideas, talents and skills resulting in a dynamic process.

Lastly, the joint practicum arrangements have implications for communities of varying demographic and cultural characteristics. Although the beginning models described in this paper are located in a rural state, some in small towns and some in cities, they are not restricted to sparsely populated, lower socio-economic areas.

For one, each model is designed to fit the characteristics of each community. The small town reading program has different characteristics from the cooperative student teacher project with a city. Every community is unique and a joint project meets its specific needs. In developing models for urban areas, the designers would also take into consideration racial, ethnic, and social class mix as well as population density. And, in creating strong relationships and a model adaptable to change, the specific arrangement will grow as necessary. Each model will differ in its stages of growth. In sum, it's not the ruralness of projects that are generalizable but the principle that each venture will be unique.

In sum, jointly sponsored practical experiences have implications for teacher training in rural and urban areas of the country. This model is an attempt to answer some vital questions concerning the costs, content and process of teacher educator programs. The model has been implemented initially at the University of Maine at Farmington. Replication and further evaluation is needed to explore its implications in the future.